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Some Notes on the
Rosenberger Family
in Pennsylvania & Virginia

1729 - 1950

By Francis Coleman Rosenberger

MEMBER: *Pennsylvania German Society*

Virginia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution

EDITOR: "*Virginia Reader: A Treasury of Writings from
the First Voyages to the Present*"

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For my father
George L. Rosenberger

Preface

THERE is a Pennsylvania-German proverb which says: It is better to do a little than to do nothing.¹ (Es ist besser ein bissel zu du als nix zu du.)²

The following notes do not attempt to be a history of the numerous Rosenberger family. It has seemed worthwhile, however, to do a little: to put between covers a few records, particularly of the family in Virginia, which the writer has assembled in a somewhat cursory examination into the history of his forebears. It has also seemed desirable to repeat briefly some of the published material on the early Rosenberger pioneers in Pennsylvania, as the volumes in which it appears have long been out of print and are not now generally available.

It is hoped that these pages may be of interest to other members of the family, as, indeed, the writer has already had evidence that they will be. It is further hoped that they may serve to stimulate the collection of other family records, so that a more complete history may someday be prepared.

Even these few pages could not have been written without the help of others. Grateful acknowledgment is made to those who have generously provided assistance. Especial thanks are due to the following:

Mr. Charles M. Rosenberger, of Winchester, Virginia, who assembled records of the family in Frederick County;

Miss Annie C. Rosenberger, of Strasburg, Virginia, who made available family records in her possession;

Rev. John W. Rosenberger, of Buckeystown, Maryland, formerly of Mt. Jackson, Virginia, who supplied information;

Mr. Cecil D. Rosenberger, of Arlington, Virginia, who supplied information;

¹ Jesse Leonard Rosenberger, *The Pennsylvania Germans: A Sketch of Their History and Life, of the Mennonites, and of Side Lights from the Rosenberger Family*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1923), p. 129.

² Dialect version supplied by Dr. Homer T. Rosenberger, Washington, D. C.

PREFACE

Mrs. John G. Yancey, of Harrisonburg, Virginia, daughter of the late Arthur Russell Rosenberger, who made available family records in her possession;

Mrs. Florence V. Lewis, of Trenton, New Jersey, a descendant of George Rosenberger of "Rosendale," who supplied information;

Dr. Homer T. Rosenberger, of Washington, D. C., formerly of Norristown, Pennsylvania, a member of the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania German Society, who has encouraged the writer to explore the history of the Pennsylvania-German settlement in the Valley of Virginia;

Miss F. F. Converse, of Harrisonburg, Virginia, who examined the records of Shenandoah, Frederick and Rockingham Counties, Virginia, and Berkeley County, West Virginia;

Miss Marjorie Templeton, of Huntington, West Virginia, who examined the Berkeley County land tax lists in the West Virginia Archives in Charleston; and

Mrs. William D. Duke, of Richmond, Virginia, who examined the Berkeley and Shenandoah County personal tax lists in the Virginia Archives in Richmond.

In addition to the following notes the writer has compiled a list of many of the descendants of Erasmus Rosenberger. This list is available in manuscript.

FRANCIS COLEMAN ROSENBERGER

Alexandria, Virginia
Summer, 1950

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I. *Rosenberger Pioneers in Pennsylvania*

THE Rosenberger family in Pennsylvania, of pioneer Pennsylvania-German or "Pennsylvania-Dutch" stock, is the subject of two published family histories. The first of these is *The Rosenberger Family of Montgomery County: Historical and Genealogical Sketches* by Edward Mathews, published by Isaiah R. Haldeman, Harleysville, Pennsylvania, 1892. The second is *A Genealogical Record of the Descendants of Henry Rosenberger of Franconia, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania* by Rev. A. J. Fretz, Milton, New Jersey, 1906.

Three other volumes, by a member of the Rosenberger family, contain material on the family history. They are: *Through Three Centuries: Colver and Rosenberger Lives and Times, 1620-1922* by Jesse Leonard Rosenberger (1860-1939), University of Chicago Press, 1922, *The Pennsylvania Germans: A Sketch of Their History and Life, of the Mennonites, and of Side Lights from the Rosenberger Family* by Jesse Leonard Rosenberger, University of Chicago Press, 1923, and *In Pennsylvania-German Land, 1928-29* by Jesse Leonard Rosenberger, University of Chicago Press, 1929.

The published histories of a number of other Pennsylvania-German families, as, for example, the histories of the Bergey¹, Brenne-
man², Cassel³, Funk⁴, Funkhouser⁵, Hottel⁶, Keagy⁷, and Strass-

¹ David Hendricks Bergey, *Genealogy of the Bergey Family*. (New York: Frederick H. Hitchcock, 1925.) 1150 pp.

² Albert H. Gerberich, *The Brenneman History*. (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Mennonite Publishing House, 1938.) 1217 pp.

³ Daniel Kolb Cassel, *A Genealogical History of the Cassel Family in America*. (Norristown, Pennsylvania: Morgan R. Wills, 1896.) 467 pp.

⁴ A. J. Fretz, *A Brief History of Bishop Henry Funck and Other Funk Pioneers, and a Complete Genealogical Family Register*. (Elkhart, Indiana: Mennonite Publishing Co., 1899.) 874 pp.

⁵ Jacob Funkhouser, *A Historical Sketch of the Funkhouser Family*. (Harrisonburg, Virginia: The Rockingham Register Press, 1902.) 100 pp.

⁶ W. D. Huddle, *History of the Descendants of John Hottel*. (Strasburg, Virginia: Shenandoah Publishing House, 1930.) 1183 pp.

⁷ Franklin Keagy, *A History of the Kägy Relationship in America*. (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Harrisburg Publishing Co., 1899.) 675 pp.

burger⁸ families, contain some information on the Rosenberger family in Pennsylvania and Virginia.

Of the Pennsylvania Germans there is an extensive literature.⁹ Perhaps the finest brief general account of the Pennsylvania-German settlement in America is the chapter "From Rhine to Susquehanna" in *The Founding of American Civilization: The Middle Colonies* by Thomas J. Wertenbaker, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938. Professor Wertenbaker, incidentally, cites the inventory of the estate of Daniel Rosenberger in Pennsylvania in 1771.

The history of the German settlement in Pennsylvania goes back to the year 1683 and the founding of Germantown by Francis Daniel Pastorius.¹⁰

To recapitulate briefly a little well-known history of the German settlement in Pennsylvania:

Pastorius came to America with a group of German settlers on the ship *America*, which landed at Philadelphia on August 20, 1683. A larger number of Pastorius's party followed on the ship *Concord*, which landed at Philadelphia on October 6, 1683. Germantown was founded on October 24, 1683.

By 1717 the number of German settlers arriving through the port of Philadelphia was such as to prompt the Governor, William Keith, and the Provincial Council to consider the matter of requiring that the settlers take an oath of allegiance to the King.

Ten years later the proposal was given effect. In 1727, under a new governor, Patrick Gordon, the Council ordered that the masters of vessels bringing German settlers in the port of Philadelphia should list the names of all their passengers, and that the settlers should take oaths of allegiance and abjuration.

In this way began a remarkable record of the names of German settlers arriving through the port of Philadelphia, which is a joy to

⁸ Ralph B. Strassburger, *The Strassburger Family and Allied Families of Pennsylvania*. (Gwynedd Valley, Pennsylvania: Printed for private circulation, 1922.) 520 pp.

⁹ Russell Wieder Gilbert, *A Picture of the Pennsylvania Germans*. Pennsylvania History Studies, No. 1. (Gettysburg, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania Historical Association, 1947.) "Selected Bibliography," pp. 56-65.

¹⁰ Samuel Whitaker Pennypacker, "The Settlement of Germantown, Pennsylvania, and the Beginning of German Immigration to North America," *Proceedings of the Pennsylvania German Society*. (Norristown, Pennsylvania, 1899), Vol. IX.

the historian and the genealogist. Lists were kept from 1727 to 1808, and provide a unique record in the annals of the early settlement of America.

A definitive edition of the lists, with a comprehensive introduction and facsimiles of the signatures, was prepared by Ralph Beaver Strassburger and William John Hinke and published in three volumes by the Pennsylvania German Society in 1934.¹¹

By the time of the Revolution the German element constituted from one-third to one-half of the whole population of Pennsylvania.¹²

The German settlers came to America largely from the lands along the Rhine, a majority of them from the Palatinate. They were Protestants, members of the Mennonite and other sects and the Lutheran and Reformed churches, and the desire for religious freedom was a powerful force in impelling them to leave their homeland to make a new life in a new world.

William Penn, who received title from the British crown in 1681 to more than 40,000 square miles of territory in America, had earlier visited the Rhine provinces and he welcomed the German Protestants as settlers.

Coupled with the desire for religious freedom was the longing to escape the oppressive burdens of the feudal system and the ever-present shadow of war and devastation.

From 1618 to 1648 the Thirty Years War had spread destruction through the fertile and once-prosperous Palatinate. It has been estimated that more than two-thirds of the entire population of the Palatinate perished in that generation of carnage.

The Thirty Years War was followed in the second half of the century by the brutal invasions of the Palatinate by the armies of Louis XIV. The land was again laid waste and villages and towns were systematically destroyed.

But, as seems generally agreed among historians of the period, it is unlikely that there would have been the wholesale migration from

¹¹ Ralph Beaver Strassburger and William John Hinke, *Pennsylvania German Pioneers: A Publication of the Original Lists of Arrivals In the Port of Philadelphia From 1727 to 1808*. (Norristown, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania German Society, 1934), 3 volumes.

¹² Gilbert, *A Picture of the Pennsylvania Germans*, p. 6.

the Palatinate if renewed persecution of the Protestants, after a period of considerable religious toleration, had not been added, beginning with the Catholic Elector John William (1690-1716), to the other burdens of the people.¹³

The worth of the German settlers and their important part in the development of the new land were early recognized. In 1738, in a message to the Provincial Assembly, Governor George Thomas said:

This Province has been for some years the asylum for the distressed Protestants of the Palatinate, and other parts of Germany; and I believe it may with truth be said that the present flourishing condition of it is in great Measure owing to the Industry of those people; and should any discouragement divert them from coming hither, it may well be apprehended that the value of your Lands will fall, and your Advances to wealth be much slower; for it is not altogether the goodness of the soil, but the Number and Industry of the People that make a flourishing Country.¹⁴

Rosenberger is a Pennsylvania-German name which has been known in Pennsylvania at least since 1729. In that year Heinrich Rosenberger¹⁵ settled in Indian Creek Valley in what is now Montgomery County, Pennsylvania.

On November 14, 1729, Heinrich Rosenberger, or, as his name has been Anglicized, Henry Rosenberger, purchased 159 acres of virgin land in what is now Franconia Township in Montgomery County. The price was £30 and the purchase was made from James Steele of Philadelphia. The land was part of a 1,000 acre tract which had been sold to Steele the previous year by Penn's commissioners of property.

The boundaries of Henry Rosenberger's purchase were: "Beginning at corner in line of Christian Haldeman; thence by same northeast 100 perches to line of Francis Daniel Pastorius; thence by

¹³ Thomas J. Wertenbaker, *The Founding of American Civilization: The Middle Colonies*. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938), pp. 265-266.

¹⁴ *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania*. (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1851), Vol. IV, p. 315. Quoted in Strassburger and Hinke, *Pennsylvania German Pioneers*, Vol. I, p. xxii.

¹⁵ Edward Mathews, *The Rosenberger Family of Montgomery County: Historical and Genealogical Sketches*. (Harleysville, Pennsylvania: Isaiah R. Halde-
man, 1892), pp. 2 ff.

same northwest 254 perches; thence southwest 100 perches by marked trees; thence by marked trees southeast 254 perches to beginning."

It appears that Henry Rosenberger began promptly to clear the land and bring it under cultivation, and to build a house and barn. He is listed as one of the taxables of Franconia, known as "The Dutch Township," in 1734.¹⁶

The sturdy log house which he built remained in existence until the first decade of the following century. It has been described: "The log house built by Heinrich Rosenberger, which was used for almost eighty years, first by him and then by his son Heinrich, was a typical log house of the better kind in early days, in that it was a story-and-a-half in height, or had side walls a little more than one story high, and rising from them a steep roof, so that the attic, having windows in the gables, made a usable room. In some houses of that kind the first story was divided into two rooms; in other cases it was left all in one room. The attic was often reached by a ladder that was easily made and that occupied little space. In other houses there were stairs, which were in some instances made by hewing out steps across a log of large diameter that would be erected with the proper slant between the floors."¹⁷

Henry Rosenberger was a Mennonite and was one of the original worshippers at the Mennonite Meeting House at Franconia. He set aside a tract of land for a burying ground there which is now the oldest section of the Franconia Church cemetery.¹⁸

On January 19, 1745, Henry Rosenberger conveyed his farm to his son Henry Rosenberger II, who was married in that year. The consideration for the farm was £200, and the increase of more than six-fold in the value of the property may be some measure of the de-

¹⁶ John D. Souder, *History of Franconia Township*. (Harleysville, Pennsylvania: Benjamin L. Gehman, 1886), p. 2.

¹⁷ Jesse Leonard Rosenberger, *The Pennsylvania Germans: A Sketch of Their History and Life, of the Mennonites, and of Side Lights from the Rosenberger Family*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1923), pp. 29-30.

¹⁸ John C. Wenger, *History of the Mennonites of the Franconia Conference*. (Telford, Pennsylvania: Franconia Mennonite Historical Society, 1937), p. 138. The index of this church history contains more than fifty references to Rosenbergers.

gree of prosperity to which the wilderness tract had been brought in less than 16 years.

Henry Rosenberger II,¹⁹ the son of the pioneer, was born December 2, 1725. He was a substantial landowner, adding other property to the farm which he purchased from his father in 1745, and he served as a Mennonite minister²⁰ at the Franconia Meeting House, of which his father had been a member. He was twice married. In 1745 he married Barbara Oberholtzer, and was the father of two sons and eight daughters. His second wife was Elizabeth, by whom he had no children. In 1772 he paid the passage to America of the "Redemptioner" Johannes Schwerdle, or John Schwardle, then 18 years of age, who arrived in the port of Philadelphia on the ship *Minerva* on September 30, 1772.²¹ For his passage to America, John Schwardle was bound for three years of work to Henry Rosenberger II. Mathews has written of him: "He came to Franconia, worked faithfully upon the Indian Creek farm, and found favor in his master's eyes as a worthy man. What is more, he found favor with his daughter Mary [Magdalena], his future wife, and after obtaining his freedom, he married her. It was a good stroke of business, for he obtained a good wife, and inherited a fine farm, which he transmitted to his descendants, who hold a large portion to the present day."²² Another daughter of Henry Rosenberger II, Sarah Rosenberger, married a younger brother of John Schwardle, Philip Schwardle, who came to America about 1782.²³

Henry Rosenberger II died in 1809. His children²⁴ were: Gertrude Rosenberger (born May 4, 1746, died in childhood), Anna Rosenberger (born February 5, 1748, married, first, Michael Leatherman, second, John Loux), Abraham Rosenberger (born May 2, 1750, died in childhood), Elizabeth Rosenberger (born December

¹⁹ A. J. Fretz, *A Genealogical Record of the Descendants of Henry Rosenberger of Franconia, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, Together With Historical and Biographical Sketches*. (Milton, New Jersey, 1906), pp. 300 ff.

²⁰ Wenger, *History of the Mennonites of the Franconia Conference*, p. 289.

²¹ Strassburger and Hinke, *Pennsylvania German Pioneers*, Vol. I, p. 740.

²² Mathews, *The Rosenberger Family*, p. 6.

²³ A. J. Fretz, *A Genealogical Record of the Descendants of the Swartley Family of Bucks and Montgomery Counties, Pennsylvania*. (Netcong, New Jersey, 1906), p. 63. The name Schwerdle or Schwardle became modified to Swartley.

²⁴ Fretz, *Descendants of Henry Rosenberger*, pp. 300 ff.

19, 1752, married Mark Fretz, died January 10, 1847), Barbara Rosenberger (born January 6, 1755, married Daniel Rickert, died 1832), Maria Rosenberger (born August 6, 1757, died January 14, 1778), Magdalena Rosenberger (born December 18, 1759, married John Schwardle, died 1808), a son (born 1761, died unnamed in infancy), a daughter (born 1762, died unnamed in infancy), and Sarah Rosenberger (born January 24, 1765, married Philip Schwardle, died April 6, 1849).

Living contemporaneously with Henry Rosenberger and his son Henry Rosenberger II in the first half of the 1700's in what is now Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, there were three other early Rosenberger settlers, who may or may not also have been sons of the first Henry Rosenberger. They were Benjamin Rosenberger, Daniel Rosenberger, and John Rosenberger.

Benjamin Rosenberger²⁵ settled at least as early as the year 1739 in what later became Hatfield Township in Montgomery County, where he purchased 125 acres of land in that year. There are records of numerous other transactions in land by him in the following years. He sold a farm in 1776, and this appears to have been shortly before his death. Another farm was sold by his heirs in 1781. His widow, Helena, died in Franconia in 1799. Children²⁶ of Benjamin Rosenberger were: Yellis (Elias) Rosenberger (died 1808), John Rosenberger, Gertrude Rosenberger (married Jacob Landis), Elizabeth Rosenberger (born February 7, 1748, married John Alderfer, died August 7, 1823).

Daniel Rosenberger²⁷ purchased 159 acres of land in 1740 in what later became Hatfield Township in Montgomery County. It appears that his purchase was then virgin land, a part of a 1,000 acre tract,

²⁵ Mathews, *The Rosenberger Family*, pp. 7 ff.

It appears that another early settler in Pennsylvania was Abraham Rosenberger. Henry James Young, *The Register of the Reformed Congregation Worshipping at Strayer's Church in Dover Township, York County, Pennsylvania, 1745-1921* (Typed copy, The Historical Society of York County, York, Pennsylvania), p. 4, notes that Abraham Rosenberger was one of the signers of an agreement, dated May 30, 1757, concerning the church building, and, p. 11, notes the baptismal record of Joh: Martin, son of Abraham and Julianna Rosenberger, baptized July 25, 1762.

²⁶ Fretz, *Descendants of Henry Rosenberger*, pp. 22 ff.

²⁷ Mathews, *The Rosenberger Family*, pp. 14 ff.

and that Daniel Rosenberger cleared it and made the first improvements upon it. In 1769 he purchased an additional 200 acres. He made his will on August 15, 1771, and died shortly thereafter, as his will was registered on September 23, 1771. His will was in German and there was filed with it an English translation which was affirmed to be a true one "from the original Dutch."²⁸ His children²⁹ were: David Rosenberger (born *circa* 1749, died 1821), Isaac Rosenberger (born November 30, 1751, died July 30, 1830), Ann Rosenberger (married Michael Kolb), and Mary Rosenberger (born *circa* 1758, married Valentine Kratz, died January 23, 1805). Mathews has written of Daniel Rosenberger: "He was a Mennonite, and attended the worship of his people at the church near Line Lexington, where his remains lie buried. After his purchase in 1740, his lifetime extended thirty-one years. Tradition says he first settled for a brief period near the County line, where Samuel Rosenberger now lives. Then he soon removed a short distance westward to where is now the residence of Henry Rosenberger. Here he built a stone house, in a low place, close by an extensive meadow. It was at this place that he died. This upper part of his plantation was devised to his son David, who built a new house in 1780, the date stone of which was preserved, and may yet be seen in the cellar way of the present building."³⁰

John Rosenberger,³¹ a contemporary of Benjamin Rosenberger and Daniel Rosenberger, was a substantial landowner in what is now Montgomery County. He was a Mennonite and was one of the trustees who in 1752 purchased the land on which the Lexington Mennonite Meeting House was built.³² It appears that the date when he purchased the land on which he built his home was about 1749 or 1750. On land which he later purchased he established a grist-mill sometime before the Revolution. This mill was the first in the region and it remained in existence until the second decade of the nineteenth century.

²⁸ Jesse Leonard Rosenberger, *The Pennsylvania Germans*, p. 142.

²⁹ Fretz, *Descendants of Henry Rosenberger*, pp. 151 ff.

³⁰ Mathews, *The Rosenberger Family*, p. 17.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 21 ff.

³² Wenger, *History of the Mennonites of the Franconia Conference*, p. 168.

Of a still later purchase by John Rosenberger, Mathews has written:

"In 1770 another portion of 109 acres was obtained by a patent received from the Proprietary Government. This comprised land lying on the northwest side of the turnpike, including the farms of Enos Kreible, John Rosenberger, and Henry Rosenberger. This had been occupied by John Rosenberger for perhaps twenty years before. Thus, we have a record of at least 308 acres bought before the Revolution. At a later period several hundred more were purchased.

"The above patent, bearing the great seal of John Penn, is now in possession of Abraham Rosenberger, living on the turnpike running to the County line. It is of date of June 19, 1770, and grants to John Rosenberger 109 acres and 31 perches for £115, 15 shillings. Its boundaries were: 'Beginning at a stone by a black oak; a corner of John Kunkle's land; thence by same northwest 155 perches; thence by Jacobina Leidie's land and Jacob Reed's southwest 100 perches; thence by Christian Keenfort's (Conver's) land southeast, 42 perches and southwest 22 perches; thence by Henry Rosenberger's land northeast 39 perches and southeast 75 perches; thence by a line of marked trees northeast 110 perches to beginning.' This was part of the 1020 acres held by the Penns in Upper Hatfield up to this date. This tract probbaly extended up to the Franconia line and beyond the Cowpath. It is quite certain, however, that a portion of these 1000 acres had been cleared and cultivated before this time. It will be perceived that the present name of Conver was differently spelled in the old documents. In this patent the tract conveyed to Rosenberger is called 'Dutchman's Hall.'"³³

John Rosenberger was twice married. His first wife was Barbara. His second wife was Christiana. Children³⁴ of John Rosenberger were: Catherine Rosenberger (born 1750, married Abraham Allebach, died May 1835), Henry Rosenberger (born *circa* 1751, died 1824), Martin Rosenberger (born *circa* 1753, died July 1781), John Rosenberger (born May 3, 1755, died September 18, 1832), Abraham Rosenberger, Benjamin Rosenberger (born 1761, died 1832), and Daniel Rosenberger (born *circa* 1765, died 1830).

³³ Mathews, *The Rosenberger Family*, pp. 24-25.

³⁴ Fretz, *Descendants of Henry Rosenberger*, pp. 246 ff.

It appears that Henry Rosenberger, who purchased land in Pennsylvania in 1729, and the other early Rosenberger settlers in Pennsylvania, came to America before the year 1727, when the record of arrivals in the port of Philadelphia, through which port they presumably came, was begun.

On those lists of arrivals, which were maintained from 1727 until 1808, there is but one name which is clearly Rosenberger. That is the name of Erasmus Rosenberger.

Erasmus Rosenberger came to America in 1749, on the ship *Ranier*, Henry Browning, Master, from Rotterdam, but last from England, which ship carried 126 adult males, and 277 passengers altogether, from "Hannau, Wirtemberg, Darmstand and Isenburg."³⁵ Erasmus Rosenberger took the oath of abjuration, required by law, at the courthouse in Philadelphia on September 26, 1749.³⁶

There are, in addition, several other names on the lists of arrivals in the port of Philadelphia which are sufficiently similar to Rosenberger as to attract the attention of one interested in the Rosenberger family history.³⁷

Henry Rosenberger II, Benjamin Rosenberger, Daniel Rosenberger and John Rosenberger were each the progenitor of a numerous line. Generation by generation the Rosenberger name spread in Pennsylvania and beyond, a fact of which the 337 pages of the family history by Fretz, a volume which is largely a list of descendants, provide abundant evidence.

Among the members of the Rosenberger family in Pennsylvania who served in the American Revolution were the following:

Henry Rosenberger (died 1824, son of John Rosenberger, 1724-1808, and Barbara, 1726-1793), Private, Seventh Class, Sixth Company, Fifth Battalion, Philadelphia County Militia;³⁸

³⁵ Strassburger and Hinke, *Pennsylvania German Pioneers*, Vol. I, p. 411.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 412; facsimile, II, 464.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, *passim*.

Johann Friedrich Rauschenberger came to America on the ship *Mary* in 1732.

Hans Peter Rousenberger (Rassenberger) came to America on the ship *Friendship* in 1738.

Others: Peter Rotenburger (indexed Rottenburger), 1750; Peter Rossburger, 1751; Joh^s Rotenberger, 1751; Andreas Rotenburger, 1752; Johannes Rothenburger, 1754.

³⁸ John Melvin Freed, Membership Papers, Pennsylvania Society of the Sons of

PIONEERS IN PENNSYLVANIA

Benjamin Rosenberger (1758-1824), Teamster, Captain Christopher Wigner's Company, Springfield Township, Bucks County;³⁹

George Rosenberger, Private, Sixth Company, Third Battalion, Cumberland County Militia, later Pennsylvania State Regiment of Foot;⁴⁰

Daniel Rosenberger, Private, First Class, First Company, Fourth Battalion, Cumberland County Militia;⁴¹

John Rosenberger, Private, Sixth Class, First Company, Fourth Battalion, Cumberland County Militia.⁴²

the American Revolution, 1940, National Number 59174, citing *Pennsylvania Archives*, Sixth Series, Vol. I, pp. 851, 870. See also Fifth Series, Vol. V, p. 380.

³⁹ George Vlerbome Young Rosenberger, Membership Papers, Pennsylvania Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, 1933, National Number 53228, citing *Pennsylvania Archives*, Fifth Series, Vol. V, p. 342. See also p. 431.

⁴⁰ Arthur Russell Rosenberger, Membership Papers, Pennsylvania Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, 1922, National Number 37742, citing Muster Rolls, Pennsylvania State Library, Harrisburg. See also *Pennsylvania Archives*, Fifth Series, Vol. VI, p. 238.

⁴¹ *Pennsylvania Archives*, Fifth Series, Vol. VI, p. 267.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 303, 310.

II. *Early Rosenberger Settlers in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia*

THE stream of German migration in the 1700's moved from Pennsylvania southwestward into the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia.

The Valley, lying between the Blue Ridge and the Allegheny Mountains, watered by the Shenandoah River which flows northward for a hundred and fifty miles to meet the Potomac at Harpers Ferry, has for generations evoked the admiration of those who have seen its beauty and fertility.¹

In the year 1716 the Royal Governor of Virginia, Alexander Spotswood,² led a party of exploration westward across the mountains. On the fifth day of September of that year, as recorded in the journal kept by one of the party, the young Huguenot John Fontaine, the expedition "drank King George's health, and all the Royal Family's, at the very top" of the mountains and, encountering "prodigious precipices," descended into the Valley.³

The settlement of the Valley, however, did not follow Spotswood's course from Tidewater Virginia westward across the formidable mountains, but rather proceeded from Pennsylvania southwestward through the rolling land and across the Potomac.⁴

The first settlers of the Valley were the sturdy German Protes-

¹ Julia Davis, *The Shenandoah*. (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., 1945), pp. 9-10.

² More precisely, Alexander Spotswood was Lieutenant Governor of Virginia. The Royal Governor of Virginia from 1710 to 1737, George Hamilton Douglas (Earl of Orkney), never came to Virginia. "Governors of Virginia," in *Report of the Secretary of the Commonwealth to the Governor and General Assembly of Virginia*. (Richmond, 1947), pp. 226-227.

³ "Journal of John Fontaine," in Ann Maury, *Memoirs of a Huguenot Family: Translated and compiled from the original autobiography of the Rev. James Fontaine, and other family manuscripts; comprising an original journal of travels in Virginia, New York, etc., in 1715 and 1716*. (New York: George P. Putnam & Co., 1853), p. 287.

⁴ Louis K. Koontz, *The Virginia Frontier, 1754-1763*. Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, Series XLIII, No. 2. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1925), p. 22.

tants from Pennsylvania.⁵ They were followed closely by the Scotch-Irish, or, more correctly, the Ulster Scots, also from Pennsylvania.⁶

The Pennsylvania-Germans established farms in the more fertile lands of the north or "lower" Valley, and by the time of the Revolution they were a predominant group of the population there.⁷

The first members of the Rosenberger family in Virginia were among these settlers. Writing of "The Germans of the Valley," Professor John Walter Wayland has said: "Numberless families, as, for example, the . . . Rosenbergers . . . could at once, from their autographs, be identified with that sturdy and painstaking race that has helped to make the Valley of Virginia the most prosperous section of the Old Dominion."⁸

The Valley was divided, by the 1770's, into seven Virginia counties.

The northernmost Valley county, its northern border the Potomac River, nearest to Pennsylvania and separated from it only by a narrow strip of western Maryland, was Berkeley County (now Berkeley, Jefferson and part of Morgan Counties, West Virginia).⁹

Frederick and Augusta Counties, named for the Prince and Princess of Wales,¹⁰ were established in 1743 and 1745 respectively, and at that time included all the Valley within their borders; and, as well, extended indefinitely westward "unto the utmost limits of Virginia."¹¹

From Frederick and Augusta were formed the other Valley

⁵ Freeman H. Hart, *The Valley of Virginia in the American Revolution, 1763-1789*. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1942), p. 5.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ John Walter Wayland, "The Germans of the Valley," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. IX, No. 4 (April 1902), p. 343.

⁹ J. Howard Myers, *West Virginia Blue Book 1948*. (Charleston, 1948), pp. 363, 400, 439.

¹⁰ Morgan Poitiaux Robinson, *Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation*. Bulletin of the Virginia State Library, Vol. 9, Nos. 1, 2, 3. (Richmond: Superintendent of Public Printing, 1916), pp. 175, 180.

¹¹ William Waller Hening, *The Statutes at Large; Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia . . .* (Richmond, 1819-1823), Vol. V, p. 78.

The act for erecting the two new counties provided "That all that territory and tract of land, at present deemed to be part of the county of Orange, lying on the north west side of the top of the said mountains, extending from thence northerly, westerly, and southerly, beyond the said mountains, to the utmost limits of

counties. Botetourt was formed from Augusta in 1770,¹² Rockingham from Augusta in 1778,¹³ and Rockbridge from Augusta and Botetourt in 1778.¹⁴ Berkeley and Shenandoah were formed from Frederick in 1772.¹⁵ At the time of its formation, Shenandoah was named Dunmore. Its name was changed from Dunmore to Shenandoah, when there seemed less reason to honor Lord Dunmore, in 1777.¹⁶

The Rosenberger family early settled in the northern portion of the Valley.

George Ludwig Rosenberger was one of the signers of the Petition of the Freeholders of Berkeley County to the Virginia Convention of 1775 protesting "a most daring and violent attack upon their Liberty of Suffrage at a time when the publick Voice in all matters referred to them ought to be collected in a most free, open and unbiassed manner."¹⁷

ERASMUS ROSENBERGER AND HIS DESCENDANTS

Erasmus Rosenberger purchased land in Berkeley County in 1776 and in Shenandoah County in 1790.

Of Erasmus Rosenberger and his family and descendants some little information has been assembled by the present writer.

The 1776 purchase by Erasmus Rosenberger consisted of some 380 acres. In the Berkeley County records is the indenture, dated May 1, 1776, "Between Thomas Campbell of the County of Berkeley and Colony of Virginia of the one part and Rasmus Rosebarger

Virginia, be separated from the rest of the said county, and erected into two distinct counties and parishes. . . ."

This legislation was enacted in November 1738, but it included the provision "That the said new counties and parishes shall remain part of the county of Orange, and parish of Saint Mark, until it shall appear to the governor and council, for the time being, that there is a sufficient number of inhabitants for appointing justices of the peace, and other officers, and erecting courts therein . . ."

¹² Hening, *Statutes*, Vol. VIII, p. 395.

¹³ *Ibid.*, IX, 420; boundary revised in 1788, XII, 637.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, IX, 420; boundary revised in 1785, XII, 74.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, VIII, 597.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, IX, 424. Then spelled Shanando.

¹⁷ Virginia Legislative Papers, Petition of Freeholders of Berkeley County to the Convention, 1775, *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. XIII, No. 4 (April 1906), pp. 412-415.

of the County of Frederick in the said Colony of Virginia of the second part" for two adjoining tracts of land, one of 187½ acres and the other of 194, "situate in the County of Berkeley (formerly Frederick) on a Branch of Opeckon."¹⁸ As is noted below, this land, rounded out with a little more which Erasmus Rosenberger acquired from Lord Fairfax in 1779, was subsequently (in 1785 and 1793) conveyed by Erasmus Rosenberger to four of his sons.

The children¹⁹ of Erasmus Rosenberger were: Erasmus Rosenberger, Junior, Henry Rosenberger, Frederick Rosenberger, John Rosenberger, Asa Rosenberger, Elizabeth Rosenberger (married Mowry), daughter (married Shall), and Evey Rosenberger (married Steed); children of his later marriage: Anthony Rosenberger, Jacob Rosenberger, Rudolph Rosenberger, Abraham Rosenberger, and Michael Rosenberger.

Although Erasmus Rosenberger is described in the 1776 deed as "of the County of Frederick in the said Colony of Virginia," it appears that he had come fairly recently from Pennsylvania. No deed in his name in Frederick County prior to the 1776 Berkeley County deed has been found,²⁰ and his son Anthony Rosenberger was apparently born in Pennsylvania in 1772.²¹

¹⁸ Berkeley County Records, Martinsburg, West Virginia, Deed Book 4, pp. 2-3.

¹⁹ This list of the children of Erasmus Rosenberger was furnished, 1949, by Miss Annie C. Rosenberger, Strasburg, Shenandoah County, Virginia, a descendant of Rudolph Rosenberger. Miss Rosenberger and her brother, Stanley Rosenberger, live on a portion of the Erasmus Rosenberger land which has been in the Rosenberger family since 1790. The list was among family papers which included a copy of the 1794 indenture of bargain and sale between Erasmus Rosenberger and Rudolph Rosenberger for the land. The list, though old, was clearly of more recent origin than the indenture, and was presumably a record made by a later member of the family. The identity of several of the sons of Erasmus Rosenberger is also shown by public records as noted below.

²⁰ There is recorded a Frederick County deed of July 31, 1775, from David Kennedy to William Roseberry, for land "on the drains of opeckon." Both the grantor and the grantee were described as of Frederick County. Deed Book 17, pp. 46-47. There is recorded also a Frederick County deed of October 4, 1791, from Thomas Humes, of Berkeley County, to Henry Roseberry and Erasmus Roseberry, of Frederick County, for 250 acres on Timber Ridge. Deed Book 22, pp. 423-426.

²¹ Berkeley County census, 1850, gives the age of Anthony Rosenberger as 78, his birthplace as Pennsylvania.

Records of Rev. John Casper Stoeber: Baptismal and Marriage, 1730-1779, translated from the original German manuscript by Rev. F. J. F. Schantz (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Harrisburg Publishing Co., 1896), p. 66, lists the marriage by

ROSENBERGER FAMILY

Erasmus Rosenberger is listed as a member of the First Battalion of the Berkeley County Militia in 1782.²²

In 1785 Erasmus Rosenberger conveyed approximately half of his land in Berkeley County to his sons Frederick Rosenberger and John Rosenberger. In the Berkeley County records is the indenture, dated January 3, 1785, "Between Rasmus Rosebarger of the County of Berkeley in the Commonwealth of Virginia of the one part and Frederick Rosebarger and John Rosebarger of the same

Rev. Stoever on July 27, 1756 of Erasmus Rosenberger and Anna Catarin Baumgaertner. Rev. Stoever (1707-1779) was a Lutheran minister who served in Pennsylvania and Virginia. Erasmus Rosenberger and Anna Catarin Baumgaertner are noted in Stoever's record as of "Hanover and Bethel." This indicates that they were from Hanover Township, now in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, and Bethel Township, now in Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, respectively. Dauphin County was formed from Lancaster County in 1785, and Lebanon County was formed from Lancaster and Dauphin in 1813. Listed also, p. 64, is the marriage by Rev. Stoever on August 10, 1754 of Peter Rosenberger and Marie Albrecht of Hanover. Research in the records of Lancaster County, which the present writer has not undertaken, may prove valuable and serve to show that Erasmus Rosenberger who was married there in 1756 was Erasmus Rosenberger who came to America in 1749 (Section I, footnote 35) and was Erasmus Rosenberger who purchased land in Berkeley County in 1776.

William Henry Egle, *Notes and Queries: Historical, Biographical and Genealogical, Relating Chiefly to Interior Pennsylvania, Annual Volume 1898* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Harrisburg Publishing Co., 1899), p. 304, lists the marriage of Erasmus Rosenberger and Anna Catharine Baumgaertner on July 27, 1756 from the records of "The Hill Church," a Lutheran congregation in what is now Lebanon County; and, p. 249, lists the following baptismal records from that church: Erasmus Rosenberger and wife Anna Catharine, Anna Barbara, b. Jan. 1, 1758; bap. Jan. 22, 1758. John Frederic, b. July 15, 1760; bap. Aug. 3, 1760. John, b. Oct. —, 1761; bap. Oct. 25, 1761.

²² Marjorie Templeton, *Berkeley County Militia*. (Typed copy, Library, National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, Washington, D. C.), p. 9.

In the Foreword the author writes: "This official Militia Roster of Berkeley County, (West) Virginia was restored by the William Henshaw Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution a few years ago. The original, of which this is a copy, may be examined in the office of the County Clerk in the court house at Martinsburg, West Virginia. . . . Records of the appointment of officers for these two battalions may be found in the Court Order Books in the Circuit Clerk's office in Winchester and in the County Clerk's office in Martinsburg."

It appears that the original list may perhaps more accurately be described as a list of property owners subject to call for military duty than as a Militia Roster.

In a letter, 1949, to the present writer, Miss Templeton wrote: "Erasmus Rosenberger of the 1st Battalion of Berkeley Co. Militia is definitely Erasmus of the Land Tax Book because the Land Book and Militia Roster is the same book. Each year the Land Tax Book is divided into two sections, 1st and 2nd Battalions.

Place of the other part.”²³ The land conveyed was “two Certain Tracts or parcels of Land adjoining each other both Situate lying and being on the Drains of Opeccon Creek in the said County of Berkeley (formerly Frederick).” The first tract contained “One Hundred and Ninety four Acres Granted to a Certain George McKenny by Deed under the hand and Seal of the Right Honourable Thomas Lord Fairfax Proprietor &c bearing Date the eighteenth day of October One Thousand Seven Hundred and fifty Six Registered in said Proprietors office Book H folio 707 and by said McKenny and Wife Conveyed to Thomas Campbell by Deeds of Lease and Release bearing Date the Sixth and Seventh days of August One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy One and Recorded in the County Court of Frederick and by the said Campbell and Wife Conveyed by Deeds of Lease and release to the said Rasmus Rosebergar.” The second tract contained “fifteen Acres Granted to the said Rasmus Rosebergar by Deed under the hand and Seal of the Right Honourable Thomas Lord Fairfax bearing Date the Sixth day of November One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy Nine registered in the said Proprietors Office Book R folio 329.” The indenture of January 3, 1785 was a “pepper corn” instrument—conveying the land for one year “for the Rent of one Pepper Corn on Lady day next if the same shall be lawfully Demanded”—and a second instrument was required to convey title. The second instrument was recorded the following day, January 4, 1785, “Between Rasmus Rosebergar and Rachell his Wife of the County of Berkeley in the Commonwealth of Virginia of the one part and

As you may know, back in those days each county was divided geographically into militia units in times of war or unrest, and every man was subject to call at any time. Many of the younger ones were called into the Continental Line and in the case of W. Va. a large number were called out to defend the forts in the mountains. Of the latter there are almost no records. They were too busy holding on to their scalps with one hand and their muskets with the other to write down who was there to do the shooting. Militia officers were sometimes elected by the men of the company, subject to being appointed by the Governor. Other times the County Commissioners recommended officers to the Governor and if he approved the selection, the officer took his appointment to the Commissioners and was sworn in. . . . Books were very scarce on the wild W. Va. frontier so several records were combined into one, that being the reason for combining Land Taxes and Militia.”

²³ Berkeley County Records, Martinsburg, West Virginia, Deed Book 6, pp. 395-397.

Frederick Rosebargar and John Rosebarger of the same place of the other part as Tenants in Common and not as joint Tenants." The consideration was £250, paid.

In 1790 Erasmus Rosenberger, continuing to own his tract of 187 acres in Berkeley County, purchased 328 acres in Shenandoah County. In 1793 he conveyed his Berkeley County tract to his sons Erasmus Rosenberger, Junior, and Henry Rosenberger. In 1794 he conveyed his Shenandoah County land to his sons Rudolph Rosenberger and Anthony Rosenberger. These transactions are noted in more detail below.

It may be remarked here that the spelling of German names in the early records presents a special problem for the researcher. On the Personal Tax Lists for Berkeley County the name of Erasmus Rosenberger appears from 1783, the first year for which lists are available, through 1789. In 1783, 1784, and 1785 his name is recorded as Erasmus Roseberger; in 1786 as Rasmus Roseberger; and in 1788 and 1789 as Erasmus Roseberry.²⁴ On the Land Tax Lists for Berkeley County his name appears from 1784 through 1793 and is recorded in similar variants.²⁵ On the Personal Tax Lists the name of Frederick Rosenberger appears in 1785 and 1786 as Roseberger, from 1788 to 1793 as Roseberry, and in 1794 as Rosebaugh.²⁶

In the public records which were written by those who knew no German, considerable violence was frequently done to the names of the German settlers—both in cases where the clerks undertook to transcribe the German script of signatures and where they undertook to write the names as they were pronounced.

²⁴ Berkeley County Tax Lists, Virginia State Archives, Richmond.

In Marjorie Templeton, *Berkeley County Militia*, see footnote 22, the name appears as Erasmus Roseberry.

²⁵ Berkeley County Tax Lists, West Virginia State Archives, Charleston.

²⁶ Berkeley County Tax Lists, Virginia State Archives, Richmond.

It may be noted that William "Rosebury" was listed in Halifax County in 1765 for a payment of £5 17s for service in the Virginia militia against the Indians on the frontier. Hening, *Statutes*, Vol. VIII, p. 131, "Whereas several companies of the militia of this colony have been drawn out into actual service, by command of his honour the governour, for the defense and protection of the frontiers against the incursions and depredations of the Indians, and there is now due on such accounts several sums of money . . ." As has been noted, William "Roseberry" purchased land in Frederick County "on the drains of opeckon" in 1775; see footnote 20.

The tendency to Anglicize the German names is as old as the German settlement in America. In discussing the captains' lists of German passengers, kept at the port of Philadelphia, Professor Hinke has commented:

They were in most cases written by men who had no knowledge of German and to whom German surnames were a mystery they could not fathom. They wrote down the names as they were pronounced to them, spelling them as they would spell English names. As a result there are hundreds of names that have such fantastic forms that they are unrecognizable. . . .

To give only a few examples of how names were misunderstood we may quote the following: One officer wrote Hendrick Sculps. The clerk of the court at Philadelphia heard Henrich Schultz, which is no doubt correct. Another wrote Albert Understal. The man himself signed Albert Otto Steg. Still another put down the monstrous form Hans Jackop Struhgefier. The man himself signed Hans Jacob Schreiber. Again, we find the English looking name Jacob Rudolph Seymour, but a glance at the next list shows that it should have been Jacob Riedesheimer. Such wide divergences prove that the A lists [captains' lists] must be used with great caution.²⁷

The same unreliability in the spelling of the German names is to be found, in varying degrees, in other public records. In his book on the Pennsylvania Germans, Jesse Leonard Rosenberger has commented:

For answering the question as to what was the original spelling of a name where, as is frequently the case, there are no trustworthy old private papers or records to refer to, the public records may often be very helpful, and lead to a fairly reliable conclusion. Such informal records as old tax lists, however, are not of much value for this purpose, since those for a number of years may have the name differently spelled almost every year, and correctly only occasionally. Much better evidence is furnished by the signatures to deeds and to wills, or, secondarily, the records of them.

Thus, the deed, wills, and probate records which have been cited, involving the names of Heinrich, Daniel, David, and Christian

²⁷ Strassburger and Hinke, *Pennsylvania German Pioneers*. Vol. III, pp. xx-xxi.

Rosenberger show quite conclusively that "Rosenberger" was the family name of each one of them.²⁸

It may be added in this digression that there has also been some tendency over the years to accept and perpetuate an Anglicized form of the German name. In Pennsylvania, for example, Yellis Rosenberger (died 1808) was the father of two sons, Benjamin (1758-1824) and Henry (1761-1834). Benjamin and his descendants kept the spelling Rosenberger. Henry and a number, but not all, of his descendants accepted the spelling Rosenberry.²⁹ The spelling Rosenberry was also accepted by some of the other branches of the Rosenberger family in Pennsylvania.³⁰

Jesse Leonard Rosenberger has noted that Jacob, the son of Christian Rosenberger (1771-1824), was married as Jacob Rosenberger but buried as Jacob Rosenberry, and that some of his children continued to use the name Rosenberry while his son Jesse retained the spelling Rosenberger.³¹

Some future genealogist of the Rosenberger family may find it of interest to examine the origins of the name of the Rosenberry and Rosenbury families of Virginia.

In the case of Erasmus Rosenberger it would appear that his Christian name presented even more difficulty to those who were charged with the keeping of records than did his surname.³²

In 1790 Erasmus Rosenberger purchased land in Shenandoah County where descendants of his have continued to make their home until the present. In the Shenandoah County records at Woodstock is the indenture dated March 20, 1790 "between Henry Fealknor of Beckford parish in the County of Shenandoah and Commonwealth of Virginia and Rossina his Wife of the One part; and Herassimus Rossenberger of Berkeley County and Commonwealth aforesaid of the other."³³ In the index to the county records the names appear as "Rosenbarger, Horassimus, from Henry Feolkner."

²⁸ Jesse Leonard Rosenberger, *The Pennsylvania Germans*, pp. 157-158.

²⁹ Fretz, *Descendants of Henry Rosenberger*, pp. 24 ff.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, *passim*.

³¹ Jesse Leonard Rosenberger, *The Pennsylvania Germans*, pp. 158 ff.

³² See footnote 57 below.

³³ Shenandoah County Records, Woodstock, Virginia, Deed Book G, pp. 477-479.

The consideration was £450, paid, and the instrument recited that the land had "been granted by Deed from the proprietors Office of the Northern Neck of Virginia to the said Henry Felknor." The clerk's certificate shows that "This Indenture of Bargain & Sale" was acknowledged and ordered to be recorded on April 30, 1790.³⁴

In 1793 Erasmus Rosenberger conveyed his remaining land in Berkeley County to his sons Erasmus Rosenberger, Junior, and Henry Rosenberger. In the Berkeley County records is the indenture dated October 10, 1793 "Between Ausmus Rosenberger Senior and Regina his wife of Shenandoah County & Commonwealth of Virginia of the one part and Henry Rosenberger and Ausmus Rosenberger Jun^r of the same place of the other part."³⁵ The land, 187 1/2 acres, was identified as "being the same land which was granted by Deed of Thomas Fairfax bearing Date the thirteenth Day of April 1760 To Richard Marchant and who conveyed the same to Thomas Campbell by Deed of Lease and release bearing date the 8 and 9th day of may 1771 and by the said Thomas Camble and Elizabeth his wife Conveyed by their Deed of Lease and release bearing Date the first and second Day of May 1776 to the said Ausmus Rosenberger which is of Record."³⁶ The metes and bounds were given as: "Beginning at a white oak in a poison field Thence South eight degrees east one hundred and fifty poles to a white oak on a ridge Then North eighty two Degrees East Two hundred and thirteen poles to two white oaks on a hill side Thence North Eight Degrees West One hundred and Thirty two poles to two white oaks on a branch Thence South eighty Seven Degrees West Two hundred and fourteen poles To the Beginning."³⁷

An order of the same date, October 10, 1793, from the Clerk of Berkeley County, was addressed to three Justices of the Peace of Shenandoah County commanding them to take Regina Rosenberger's acknowledgment. A certificate, dated October 12, 1793, from two of the Justices showed that they had taken the acknowledgment. The Clerk's certificate, dated October 15, 1793, showed

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Berkeley County Records, Martinsburg, West Virginia, Deed Book 11, pp. 338-342.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*

that these instruments had been "proved by the oaths of" three persons, two of whom were "Anthony Roseberry & Randolph Roseberry."³⁸

In 1794 Erasmus Rosenberger conveyed his 328 acres in Shenandoah County in two 164-acre tracts to his sons Rudolph Rosenberger and Anthony Rosenberger. The two indentures, in the Shenandoah County records at Woodstock, are similar.

The first was "Between Herasmus Rosenberger and Regina his Wife of the County of Shenandoah and State of Virginia of the one part and Rudolph Rosenberger of the Same County and State of the other part."³⁹ The land "Granted Bargained and Sold Aleined Released and Confirmed" consisted of "one Certain piece parcel or Tract of Land Lying and being in the said County of Shenandoah on funks Mill Run a branch of the North river of Shenandoah it Being part of a tract of three hundred and twenty Eight Acres granted to Henry Felkner by deed from the Late proprietors office of the Northern Neck of Virginia bearing date the tenth Day of May 1763 and by him and Rosina his wife conveyed to the said Herasmus Rossenbarger by their certain Deed of Bargain and Sale bearing date of the twentieth Day of March 1790."⁴⁰ This tract conveyed to Rudolph Rosenberger was described as: "Beginning at two Red Oakes a Ridge Corner to Jacob Funkhousers Survey in the line of Jacob Bowman and running thence with Bowmans Lines . . ." and "Containing one hundred and sixty four Acres be the Same more or less." One of the witnesses was Anthony Rosenberger.

The second indenture was "Between Herasmus Rosenberger and Regina his wife of the County of Shenandoah and State of Virginia of the one part and Anthony Rosenberger of the Same County and State of the other part."⁴¹ The 328-acre tract was described as it was in the conveyance to Rudolph Rosenberger and the indenture set forth that "that part thereof which is hereby Conveyed to the Said Anthony Rosenberger is bounded as followeth to wit Beginning at a Stake in the old line near a Cornered Black oak a dividing

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Shenandoah County Records, Woodstock, Virginia, Deed Book I, pp. 351-353.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 354-356.

Corner Between him and his brother Rudolph Rosenberger and Running thence with the old Lines . . .” A line ran “to a Small Sasafra a dividing Corner between him and his said Brother Rudolph Rosenberger and then Crossing the Intire tract with his line N 28 E^t two hundred and one poles to the Beginning Containing one hundred Sixty four acres be the Same more or less.”⁴² One of the witnesses was Rudolph Rosenberger.

In each case the consideration for the 164 acres was £300.

On the Land Tax Lists it is recorded that in the years 1791, 1792, 1793 and 1794 “Heronimus Rosenberger” paid tax on 328 acres in Shenandoah County.⁴³

In 1795 and 1796 it is recorded that “Rudolph Rosebarger” paid tax on 164 acres in Shenandoah County “from his father.”⁴⁴

Similarly it is recorded that “Anthony Rosebarger” paid tax in 1795 and 1796 on 164 acres in Shenandoah County “from his father.”⁴⁵

The names appear on the Tax Lists in still other variant spellings.⁴⁶

It would appear that in these years Erasmus Rosenberger may have been undertaking to see that each of his sons was established on a farm of his own. If this was his purpose, and if equally his sons were anxious in these years to have title to their own property, the marriage bond records of Shenandoah County would suggest a reason why. The following marriage bonds are recorded:

Anthony Rosenberger and Rebecca Messersmith, May 29, 1792;
Henry Rosenberger surety;⁴⁷

Rudolph Rosenberger and Barbara Hammon, April 9, 1795;⁴⁸

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Shenandoah County Tax Lists, Virginia State Archives, Richmond.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

The following tithers are recorded: 1791, “Asmus” and Anthony “Roseberger”; 1792, “Asmus” and Anthony “Roseberger”; 1793, “Heronimus” and Rudolph “Roseberger”; 1794, “Heronimus,” Rudolph and Anthony “Roseberger”; 1796, Rudolph and Anthony Rosenberger; 1797, George Rosenberger (2 tithers); 1798, George Rosenberger (2 tithers), Rudolph and Anthony Rosenberger; 1799, George Rosenberger (3 tithers) and Michael “Rosinbarger”.

⁴⁷ Shenandoah County Records, Woodstock, Virginia, Marriage Bond Book, p. 50.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

ROSENBERGER FAMILY

Jacob Rosenberger and Betsy Brubeck, August 31, 1799; daughter of John;⁴⁹

Michael Rosenberger and Betsey Jennings, August 31, 1799; daughter of William;⁵⁰

Abraham Rosenberger and Rebecca Hammon, January 9, 1802; Anthony Rosenberger surety;⁵¹

Henry Rosenberger and Mary Funkhouser, May 21, 1803; daughter of John.⁵²

In the neighboring county of Frederick, lying between Shenandoah and Berkeley, is recorded the following marriage:

Asa "Rosinberry" and Mary Carnes, August 26, 1794; marriage performed by the Rev. Christian Streit.⁵³

In the same year, 1794, Asa "Roseberry" purchased land in Frederick County.⁵⁴

In 1797 Michael Rosenberger purchased land in Shenandoah County.⁵⁵

In 1787 Frederick Rosenberger and John Rosenberger conveyed to Frederick Mower a small part of the land in Berkeley County which they had acquired from their father two years before, including the 15 acres "on the Drains of Opecon Creek" which Erasmus Rosenberger had obtained from the Proprietor's Office in 1779. In the Berkeley County records is the indenture, dated April 17, 1787, between "Frederick Roseberger and Barbery his wife and John Roseberger of Berkeley County and Commonwealth of Virginia" and "Frederick Mower of the same place."⁵⁶ The land "granted bargained sold aliened enfeoffed and confirmed" consisted of 17 acres and 3 roods in Berkeley County "on the drains of Opeckon creek the same being two different tracts adjoining each

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 183.

⁵³ Frederick County Records, Winchester, Virginia, Marriage Register, p. 145, line 27.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, Deed Book SC 2, p. 245.

⁵⁵ Shenandoah County Records, Woodstock, Virginia, Deed Book L, p. 380.

⁵⁶ Berkeley County Records, Martinsburg, West Virginia, Deed Book 7, pp. 184-187.

other the one an entire tract of fifteen acres and 3 roods granted Ozmus Roseberger by deed from the proprietor of the northern neck of Virginia bearing date the sixth day of November 1779 registered in the proprietors office book R folio 329 as bounded as followeth . . . the other tract of two acres being part of a larger tract granted to George McKenie by deed from the proprietor of the northern neck of Virginia bearing date 18th day of October 1756 and conveyed from said McKenie to Thomas Campbell by deeds of lease and release bearing date the 6 and 7 days of August 1771 convey'd by said Campbell to Ozmus Roseberger as will appear by the records of Berkeley County and then with the above mentioned tract conveyed from said Ozmus Roseberger⁵⁷ to Frederick and John Roseberger as also will appear by the records of said County of Berkeley and bounded as followeth . . .” The consideration was 12 shillings and six pence, paid.

Later in the same year, 1787, John Rosenberger conveyed to Frederick Rosenberger his interest in the remainder of the tract which they had acquired from their father. The indenture, “Between John Rosebarger of Berkeley County and Commonwealth of Virginia of the one part and Frederick Rosebarger of the said County of Berkeley and Commonwealth Aforesaid of the Other part,” was

⁵⁷ Thus in public records which unmistakably refer to Erasmus Rosenberger, his Christian name has been found in these variants: Erasmus, Herasmus, Herasimus, Herassimus, Horassimus, Heronimus, Rasmus, Asmus, Ausmus, and Ozmus. An inspection of his signature, which the present writer has examined on a 1794 indenture, shows how the name Erasmus in the German script in which it was written might be misread as some of these variants. See “Capital German Letters” and “Small German Letters” in Strassburger and Hinke, *Pennsylvania German Pioneers*, Vol. 2, pp. 891-893, and the facsimile signature of Erasmus Rosenberger in the same, Vol. 2, p. 464. “Herassimus” and similar variants may have been approximations of his actual pronunciation of the name. The variant “Heronimus” becomes easier to understand when it is observed that Hieronymus was apparently a family name known in Berkeley County; Andreas Hieronymus is listed as a signer of the Petition of Freeholders of Berkeley County to the Virginia Convention of 1775, cited in footnote 17 above. To these variants one more may be added. The present writer is informed that a book which he has not had the opportunity to examine, Morgan Homer Dyer, *Index to Land Grants in West Virginia*, Charleston, 1896, p. 655, notes that “Oyunes Roseberger” was granted 15 acres on waters of Opequon Creek in Berkeley County in 1779. This was presumably the 15 acres “on the drains of Opeckon creek” which has been noted above as “granted Ozmus Rosenberger by deed from the proprietor of the northern neck of Virginia bearing date of the sixth day of November 1779.” Script which could be read as Ozmus could no doubt be read as Oyunes.

dated September 14, 1787.⁵⁸ The land was "One certain Tract of Land Containing One hundred and Ninety Two Acres be the same more or less being part of a larger Tract of 194 Acres conveyed to the Said Frederick Rosebarger and Said John Rosebarger as Tenants in Common and not as joint Tenants from Rasmus Roseberger and Rachel his Wife by Deed of Lease and release Bearing date the third and fourth days of January in the Year of Our Lord One Thousand seven hundred and eighty five the said Tract of Land lying and being in the said County of Berkeley and Situate on the Drains of Opeckon Creek And bounded As may be seen by the said Deeds of Lease and Release which the said John Rosebarger hath hereby conveyed and confirmed unto the said Frederick Rosebarger all his part in and to the said Land or any part of the same which he did hold by virtue of said Deeds of Lease & Release . . ."⁵⁹ The consideration was £30, paid.

There were subsequently a number of transactions in land by Frederick Rosenberger in the adjoining county of Frederick,⁶⁰ and he conveyed land there in 1818 to Frederick Rosenberger, Junior.⁶¹

In 1798 Henry Rosenberger conveyed to Henry Pane the 187 ½ acres in Berkeley County which had been conveyed to him and to Erasmus Rosenberger, Junior, five years before by Erasmus Rosenberger, Senior. The indenture, "between Henry Rosebarger of the county of Frederick & state of Virginia of the one part & Henry Pane of Berkeley in the said state of the other part," was dated October 22, 1798; and the land was described as "two certain Tracts or parcels of Land, adjoining, situate in the county of Berkeley formerly Frederick on a branch of opecken & bounded as followeth" containing "one hundred & eighty seven acres & a half conveyed to Thomas Campbell by Deed of lease & release from Richard Marchant & Elizabeth his wife bearing date the 8th & 9th days of May 1771 granted to the said Richard Marchant by Deed under the hand and seal of the right honourable Thomas Lord Fairfax proprietor & bearing date the 30th day of April in the year of our Lord one thous-

⁵⁸ Berkeley County Records, Martinsburg, West Virginia, Deed Book 8, pp. 22-23.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ Frederick County Records, Winchester, Virginia, Deed Books, *passim*.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, Deed Book 40, p. 481.

and seven hundred & sixty.”⁶² The consideration was £630, paid.

In 1803 Anthony Rosenberger conveyed to Henry Rosenberger the 164 acres in Shenandoah County which he had acquired from his father Erasmus Rosenberger in 1794. The indenture, “Between Anthoney Rosenberger, and Margaret his wife of Shenandoah County, and State of Virginia, and Henry Rozenberger, of the same County and State, of the other part,” was dated October 10, 1803.⁶³ The land was described as “a certain piece parcel or tract of land lying in the said County of Shenandoah on funks Mill run, being the Same land which was conveyed to the said Anthony Rozenberger, by deed from his father Heresamus Rozenberger, and Regenia his wife, bearing date the 29th day of April 1794 & now of record in the County Court of Shenandoah refference being thereunto had may More fully and at large appear. . .” It was “bounded as followeth ‘to wit,’ Beginning at a Stake in the old line, near a Cornered black oak, a dividing Corner between said Herasimus Rozenberger, and his⁶⁴ brother Rudolph Rozenberger, and running thence with the old lines . . .” The consideration was £700, paid.

⁶² Berkeley County Records, Martinsburg, West Virginia, Deed Book 15, pp. 65-66.

This is obviously the 187½ acres which, as noted above, was conveyed by Erasmus Rosenberger in 1793 by the indenture “Between Ausmus Rosenberger Senior and Regina his wife of Shenandoah County & Commonwealth of Virginia of the one part and Henry Rosenberger and Ausmus Rosenberger Jun^r of the same place of the other part.” In the 1798 indenture, however, it is stated in the covenants of title “. . . lastly that the said Henry Roseberger & his heirs all & singular the premises hereby granted & released with the appurtenances unto the said Henry Pane his heirs and assigns, against him the said Henry Rosebargar & his heirs & all and every other person or persons whatsoever shall & ever defend by these presents, now the aforesaid Thomas Campbell & Margaret his wife, granted bargained, sold, aliend, released & confirmed unto Rasmus Roseberrger the tract of Land aforesaid & the said Rasmus Roseberger farther of the said Henry Roseberger by his last will & testament bequeathed unto his son Henry the aforesaid Tract of Land to him & his heirs and assigns forever.”

⁶³ Shenandoah County Records, Woodstock, Virginia, Deed Book N, pp. 354-355.

⁶⁴ This was apparently a misreading of the description of the land which was contained in the 1794 conveyance from Erasmus Rosenberger to Anthony Rosenberger. As noted above, Erasmus Rosenberger conveyed 328 acres in two 164-acre tracts, one to Rudolph Rosenberger and one to Anthony Rosenberger. In the conveyance to Anthony Rosenberger the whole tract is described and it is then stated: “that part thereof which is hereby Conveyed to the said Anthony Rosenberger is bounded as followeth to wit Beginning at a Stake in the old line near a

ROSENBERGER FAMILY

Anthony Rosenberger returned to Berkeley County where he lived for a number of years. His wife Margaret died August 28, 1830, and was buried at Smithfield, Berkeley County. He made his last will on June 1, 1850, leaving a substantial estate to his three sons and seven daughters and to his wife Nancy,⁶⁵ mother of the youngest two children. The will was probated at the January 1853 term of the Court.⁶⁶ The children named in his will were: Elizabeth Rosenberger (married Henry Pultz, name sometimes appears as Bolts), John Rosenberger, Henry Rosenberger (lived in Ohio in 1850), Margaret Rosenberger (married William Watson), Christiana Rosenberger (married Knupp), Catharine Rosenberger (married Francis M. Burkhart in Berkeley County in 1829), Mary Rosenberger (married McClure), Nancy Rosenberger (married Burwell), Susan Rebecca Rosenberger (married Pitzer) and James Anthony Rosenberger.

Rudolph Rosenberger died in Shenandoah County in 1846. His children were: Abraham Rosenberger, William Rosenberger, Ausamus (Asa) Rosenberger (married Rachel Pittman in 1819), Paul Rosenberger (born July 3, 1799, married Cathrine Hockman, February 28, 1825, died September 13, 1875), Philip Rosenberger, Jacob Rosenberger (married Sophia Pontazer in 1828, died 1869), Charlotte Rosenberger, Catherine Rosenberger (married Henry Baker in 1819), Regina Rosenberger (married Joseph Brobeck in 1826), Mary Ann Rosenberger (married Michael Hammon in 1828), Frances Rosenberger (married Levi Bly in 1830), Rebecca Ann (Peggy Ann) Rosenberger (married Jacob Kern in 1833), Flora Rosenberger (married Samuel Bly in 1836) and Nancy Rosenberger (married Peter Stickley in 1839).

Two other sons of Erasmus Rosenberger, Jacob and Michael, died some years earlier than Anthony and Rudolph.

Jacob Rosenberger purchased land in Frederick County in

Cornered Black oak a dividing Corner Between him and his brother Rudolph Rosenberger and Running thence with the old lines. . ."

⁶⁵ Marriage Bond for Anthony Rosenberger and Nancy Hefflebower, dated July 25, 1831, George Hefflebower, Jr., surety, is recorded in Frederick County. Frederick County Records, Winchester, Virginia, Marriage Register, p. 156-B, line 16.

⁶⁶ Berkeley County Records, Martinsburg, West Virginia, Will Book 17, pp. 206-208.

1809⁶⁷ which is now owned by his great-grandson Charles M. Rosenberger (born 1876). Jacob Rosenberger established a flour mill which he operated until his death a few years later. The "Account of the Sale of the Personal Estate of Jacob Rosenburger deceased," dated April 1815, was recorded in Frederick County on May 5, 1817.⁶⁸ In the account were items "for boarding" and "for tuition" for his children and an item "for translating dutch into english."⁶⁹ The appraisement noted a "Number of Dutch books."⁷⁰ Jacob Rosenberger was the father of four children: William Rosenberger (born August 31, 1800, married Elizabeth Larrick, died November 30, 1880), Regina Rosenberger (born 1801, married Henry Clowser, January 15, 1820), Margaret Rosenberger (married Col. James B. Hall, August 7, 1822), and John B. Rosenberger (born February 24, 1814, married Catherine Richard, March 7, 1835, died May 25, 1880).

The appraisement of the personal estate of Michael Rosenberger, deceased, was dated November 17, 1817, and was ordered to be recorded in Frederick County on September 4, 1820.⁷¹

Another son of Erasmus Rosenberger, Abraham Rosenberger, was born in Virginia between 1775 and 1780,⁷² probably in Berkeley County where his father, as has been noted, had owned land since 1776. Abraham Rosenberger was twice married, first to Rebecca Hammon. The marriage bond for Abraham Rosenberger and Rebecca Hammon in Shenandoah County, as has been noted, was dated January 9, 1802, and Anthony Rosenberger was surety on the bond. (It will be recalled that his brother Rudolph Rosenberger married Barbara Hammon in Shenandoah County in 1795.) The children of Abraham Rosenberger's first marriage were three sons, Abraham Rosenberger, Paul Rosenberger and Jacob Rosenberger, and a daughter.⁷³

⁶⁷ Frederick County Records, Winchester, Virginia, Deed Book 31, pp. 484.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Will Book 11, pp. 85-88.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, Will Book 10, pp. 161-166.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, Will Book 10, pp. 589-590.

⁷² Shenandoah County census, 1820, lists Abraham Rosenberger as between 26 and 45 years; in 1830 as between 50 and 60 years; in 1840 as between 60 and 70 years; his birthplace as Virginia.

⁷³ Information from Abraham Rosenberger (1858-1946), Jeffersonton, Cul-

Abraham Rosenberger's first wife Rebecca Hammon probably died sometime before 1814. On March 3, 1814, Paul Hammon conveyed to Abraham Rosenberger 323 acres of land on Stony Creek in Shenandoah County. The indenture,⁷⁴ "between Paul Hammon one of the sons and Heirs at Law of Paul Hammon deceas'd of the County of Shenandoah and State of Virginia of the one part, and Abraham Rosenberger of the Same County and State of the other part," recites that the land was "one equal undivided Seventh part or share of one certain tract or parcel of land lying and being in the aforesaid County of Shenandoah on the branches of Stony Creek, and was first granted by Deed from the Proprietors office of the Northern neck of Virginia bearing date the 28th day of September 1772 to Henry Felkner, who sold and conveyed the same to the said Paul Hammon decd." The indenture recites further that Paul Hammon had died, intestate, "leaving Seven children his Heirs at Law of whom the said Paul Hammon is one, who doth hereby Sell and convey his Share or one equal undivided Seventh part thereof to the said Abraham Rosenberger." The consideration, apparently a nominal payment, was \$80.00. As there is no record of land in Shenandoah County in the name of Abraham Rosenberger before 1814, it appears probable that until then he had farmed some part of the Hammon property in the years after his marriage to Rebecca Hammon in 1802. A farm of 2,261 acres, which this would have been if 323 acres were a seventh part, would have required considerable attention. The land conveyed to Abraham Rosenberger in 1814 remained in the Rosenberger family until 1882.

Abraham Rosenberger's second wife was Nancy Sager, born in 1788, the widow of George Kitman. Nancy Sager, the daughter of John Sager, was married to George Kitman in Shenandoah County

peper County, Virginia. Shenandoah County census, 1810, lists children as 3 males under 10 years, 1 female under 10 years. Whether the son Abraham Rosenberger was, as appears probable, the Abraham T. W. Rosenberger (died 1870), of Shenandoah County, whose descendants are listed in W. D. Huddle, *History of the Descendants of John Hottel*, p. 243, has not been determined by the present writer.

⁷⁴ Shenandoah County Records, Woodstock, Virginia, Deed Book U, pp. 713-714.

in 1808.⁷⁵ Abraham Rosenberger and Nancy Sager Kitman were married in Shenandoah County in 1815.⁷⁶ Their children were four sons and three daughters: Joseph Rosenberger (married Elizabeth), Levi Rosenberger (born July 25, 1825, married Barbara Funkhouser, 1845, seven children; married, second, Kate Wilson, 1897, no children; died November 23, 1905), Adam Rosenberger (married Mary Long, 1851), John Rosenberger (married Sarah), Sarah Ann Rosenberger (married Alexander M. Shaver, 1841), Hannah Rosenberger (married Nathan Mumbert, 1848; name sometimes appears as Mumfort and Mumford) and Lydia (Lettie) Rosenberger (married David Myers).

Abraham Rosenberger died sometime before June 17, 1847, the date of the appraisement of his personal estate.⁷⁷ Among the items listed in the appraisement, which included a variety of farm implements and household furnishings, was "1 Lot German Books."

A deed of May 7, 1853,⁷⁸ "between John Rosenbarger and Sarah his wife, Joseph Rosenbarger and Elizabeth his wife, Adam Rosenbarger and Mary his wife, David Myers and Lydia his wife, Alexander M. Shaver and Sarah Ann his wife, Nathaniel Mumfort and Hannah his wife, heirs at law of the estate of Abraham Rosenbarger, decd. of the one part, and Levi Rosenbarger of the other part," provided "That, for and in Consideration of a Certain Agreement which was entered into by the Said Abraham Rosenbarger and Levi Rosenbarger, his son, Specifying that the Said Levi Rosenbarger shall pay all the debts of the said Abraham Rosenbarger and support him and his wife for and during their life, the said heirs of Abraham Rosenbarger decd. do grant and hereby Convey to the said Levi Rosenbarger, his heirs and assigns a Certain tract of land known to belong to the Said Abraham Rosenbarger at the time of his death."

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, Marriage Bond Book, p. 160. Date of Bond, December 6, 1808; name of groom given as George Kitner; bride Nancy Sager, daughter of John.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, Bond of Abraham Rosenberger for the marriage of "the above bound Abraham Rosenbarger and Nancy Kitman (Widow of George Kitman decd.)" William Sager, surety. Bond dated December 18, printed year 181— not filled in. Year was apparently 1815. Bond was payable to Wilson C. Nicholas, as Governor. Nicholas was Governor of Virginia for the term 1814-1816.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, Will Book Y, pp. 180-182.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, Deed Book 2, p. 143.

It was provided further that "It is expressly understood that the said Levi Rosenbarger, his heirs and assigns, shall support the said Abraham Rosenbarger's Widow (now living) out of the above mentioned tract of land during her life. And the said grantors hereby covenant that they have the right to Convey the said real estate to the grantees, that the said grantee shall have quiet possession of Said premises and free from all encumbrances and that they will warrant generally the property hereby Conveyed."

In the 1860's Levi Rosenberger removed from Shenandoah County to Culpeper County, where he rented and subsequently purchased the farm "Fleetwood" near the town of Jeffersonton. Here he made his home until his death in 1905.⁷⁹ His eldest son George W. Rosenberger⁸⁰ lived at "Fleetwood" for some years, and a younger son Abraham Rosenberger lived here until his death in 1946. Here in 1878 the writer's father, George L. Rosenberger (son of George W. Rosenberger) was born. Here also were born other members of the family and "Fleetwood" has long been affectionately regarded as the old Rosenberger homestead in Culpeper County. It was earlier the home of the Fishback family, and the oldest part of the house is said to date to 1748.⁸¹

The children of Levi Rosenberger were: Sarah Rosenberger (born 1847, married Richard Nalls, died 1930), Elizabeth Rosenberger (born 1849, died 1855), George W. Rosenberger (born April 30, 1851, married Kate B. McDonald, November 30, 1875 in Culpeper County, died June 21, 1914), Nathan Rosenberger (born August 29, 1853, unmarried, died 1931), Catherine (Kate) Rosen-

⁷⁹ Culpeper County Records, Culpeper, Virginia, Will Book 3, p. 363.

⁸⁰ George W. Rosenberger, obituary, Manassas, Virginia, *Journal*, June 26, 1914. "At 8 o'clock last Saturday morning, June 20th, this good and valuable man suffered a sudden and severe stroke of paralysis from which he died at 5 o'clock the following morning. The Grace Methodist church, Manassas, could not seat the crowd that attended his funeral there on Tuesday afternoon, the 23rd. . . He leaves his widow, who was Miss Kate B. McDonald, of Culpeper, and seven children . . . Mr. Rosenberger was 63 years old, a native of Shenandoah county, Va., having lived many years in Culpeper county, near the town of Jeffersonton, but having been for the past twenty-two years a resident of Prince William . . . Mr. Rosenberger was of the quiet, gentle, unpretending type . . . Implicitly trusted in business and highly esteemed as a neighbor and friend, his death inflicts a real loss upon our community. . ."

⁸¹ William Miller Kemper, *Genealogy of the Fishback Family in America*. (New York: Thomas Madison Taylor, 1914), p. 72.

berger (born March 16, 1856, married Richard Bane), Abraham Rosenberger (born March 9, 1858, married Mary Alice Ball, died August 11, 1946) and John Rosenberger (born April 12, 1861, died September 25, 1928).

GEORGE ROSENBERGER AND HIS DESCENDANTS

George Rosenberger, a contemporary of Erasmus Rosenberger, lived in Shenandoah County and Rockingham County in what later became Page.⁸² His name appears on the earliest list of the tithables of Rockingham County which has been preserved, that of 1792,⁸³ and on the lists of Shenandoah County beginning in 1797.⁸⁴ Family tradition is that he came to Virginia from Pennsylvania and that he served in the Revolution.⁸⁵ His grave and that of his wife are on the Morgan Biedler farm, near Stanley, in Page County.⁸⁶

Children⁸⁷ of George Rosenberger were: Peter Rosenberger (born 1791, married Elizabeth Spitler, 1818), Mary Rosenberger (born 1786, married Abraham Spitler, 1810, died 1878), Barbara Rosenberger (born 1788, married Daniel Spitler, 1818, died 1880), Anna Rosenberger (married Adam Long, 1810), Magdaline Rosenberger (married Joseph Hite, 1811), and George Rosenberger.

The son George Rosenberger was born in Virginia in 1778,⁸⁸ and

⁸² Page County was formed from Shenandoah and Rockingham in 1831.

The possibility that the "first" George Rosenberger of Rockingham and Shenandoah in the 1790's was the George Ludwig Rosenberger of Berkeley County in 1775 (footnote 17) has occurred to the writer.

⁸³ Harry M. Strickler, *Tenth Legion Tithables: Rockingham County, Virginia, Tithables for 1792*. (Luray, Virginia, 1930), p. 37.

⁸⁴ Shenandoah County Tax Lists, Virginia State Archives, Richmond. Noted as two tithers.

⁸⁵ Arthur Russell Rosenberger (1857-1945), of "Rosendale" and Harrisonburg, Virginia, a descendant of George Rosenberger, identified him as the George Rosenberger who was a member of the Sixth Company, Third Battalion, Cumberland County Militia, later Pennsylvania State Regiment of Foot. See Section I, footnote 40.

⁸⁶ Information furnished by Mrs. Florence V. Lewis, Trenton, New Jersey, a descendant of George Rosenberger.

⁸⁷ This is the most accurate list of the children of the "first" George Rosenberger which the present writer has been able to assemble with the assistance of various descendants. There was perhaps another daughter and possibly other sons.

⁸⁸ Rockingham County census, 1850, gives the age of George Rosenberger as 72, his birthplace as Virginia.

married Margaret Zerkel (Zirkle), daughter of Lewis Zerkel, in Rockingham County in 1802.⁸⁹

George Rosenberger purchased land in Shenandoah County in 1805,⁹⁰ and was a grantor in several deeds there in 1810.⁹¹

In 1814 George Rosenberger purchased the land in Rockingham County which became known as "Rosendale"⁹² and which remained a Rosenberger home until the early years of the next century. In Rockingham County is recorded the deed, dated January 12, 1814, "Between John Zirkle and Eleanor his wife of the County of Shenandoah and State of Virginia of the one part, and George Rosenbarger of the Same County and State of the other part."⁹³ The land conveyed was 300 acres in "the County of Rockingham and State aforesaid on the east side of Smiths Creek." The consideration was £1,200.

A number of other transactions in land by George Rosenberger are recorded in Rockingham County.⁹⁴

Children⁹⁵ of George Rosenberger (born 1778) were: Delitha Rosenberger (born September 1803, married Jacob Strickler, March

⁸⁹ Rosenberger Bible owned by Mrs. Eva L. Allen. Information furnished by Mrs. Florence V. Lewis, Trenton, New Jersey. See also Rockingham County Records, Harrisonburg, Virginia, Index to Marriage Bonds and Marriages.

Harry M. Strickler, *Old Tenth Legion Marriages: Marriages in Rockingham County, Virginia, From 1778 to 1816, Taken from the marriage bonds* (Dayton, Virginia: Joseph K. Ruebush, 1928), p. 99, lists George Rosenberger and Margaret Zirkley; father, Lewis; surety, Jno. Sulcar; consent note, Ludwig and Mary Zerkel; witnesses, Arch. Huston and Jno. Sulcar; 1802.

John W. Wayland, *Virginia Valley Records: Genealogical and Historical Materials of Rockingham County, Virginia, and Related Regions* (Strasburg, Virginia: Shenandoah Publishing House, Inc., 1930), p. 14, "Marriages in Rockingham County," lists George Rosenberger and Marget Zerkel, November 30, 1802.

⁹⁰ Shenandoah County Records, Woodstock, Virginia, Deed Book P, p. 372.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, *passim*.

⁹² John W. Wayland, *A History of Shenandoah County, Virginia* (Strasburg, Virginia: Shenandoah Publishing House, Inc., 1927), p. 465, "Other Famous Homes . . . At short distances farther up Smith Creek, in the edge of Rockingham County, are Craney Island, the old Bird home (under Bird's Knob), and Rosendale, long the residence of George W. Rosenberger and his sons; now a part of the Engless Caverns estate . . ."

⁹³ Rockingham County Records, Harrisonburg, Virginia, "Burned Records," Deed Book 2, pp. 192-194.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, *passim*.

⁹⁵ Rosenberger Bible owned by Mrs. Eva L. Allen. Information furnished by Mrs. Florence V. Lewis, Trenton, New Jersey.

7, 1821, died February 6, 1841), Eleanor Rosenberger (married Jacob Price, March 25, 1834), Edmond John Rosenberger (born July 11, 1809, died December 23, 1882),⁹⁶ Berryman Rosenberger (born November 19, 1813, died March 6, 1815), and George W. Rosenberger.

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⁹⁶ A printed memorial to Edmond John Rosenberger, in the possession of Mrs. John Yancey, Harrisonburg, Virginia, daughter of Arthur Russell Rosenberger (1857-1945), is in part as follows:

"In Memoriam. Edmond John Rosenberger, died, Saturday, December 23, 1882.

"Edmond John Rosenberger, son of George and Margaret Rosenberger, born on July 11, 1809, and baptized on Aug. 6, 1810, by Rev. Paul Henkel, departed this life on Dec. 23, 1882; aged 73 years, 5 months, and 12 days. His marriage with Miss Elizabeth Martz was consummated, on Feb. 28, 1833, and that with Miss Mary Rothgeb, who survives him, on Dec. 22, 1836. He was the father of nine children, two—one son and one daughter—by his first marriage; and seven—four sons and three daughters—by his second; —five of whom survive him,—one daughter from his first marriage, and one son and three daughters from his second,—with twenty-six grand-children and two great-grandchildren. Of his two brothers, only one, Mr. Geo. W. Rosenberger, survives him, and of his two sisters, none.

"He was born on the little Hawksbill Creek, Page Co., Va. When he was about six years old, his father with his family moved to Rockingham Co., Va., and located on the old homestead, on Smith Creek, about four miles South of New Market, and now known as Rosendale, where he was reared up an obedient and dutiful son.

"At the age of 24 years, on entering into the holy estate of matrimony, he located on an adjoining farm, the Abraham Bird homestead, situated on the western side of Smith Creek, and now known as Cloverdale, where he reared an industrious, thrifty family, most affectionately devoted to him and to each other. His efforts as an agriculturist were crowned with success, all being characterized by industry, system, frugality, and judicious supervision. He was an active, incessant worker, during the first half of his life, until his health became impaired by rheumatism, to some extent, and after that, he continued to lend a helping hand during the busy seasons, even down to his enfeebled old age. He manifested great interest in agriculture, claiming it as the most independent pursuit.

"He was an affectionate husband, a kind father, and an obliging neighbor,—courteous and generous, peace-loving and law-abiding,—one of the old type of reliable, trustworthy citizens, having respect to his duties and obligations, with a strict sense of fair dealing; and hence, having lived his allotted time, three score years and ten, and over, he went down to his grave with his gray hairs, honored and revered by his family and respected by his numerous friends, having 'set his house in order,' and expressing his reconciliation, and firm conviction of a future state of happiness in an internal, spiritual, unending world, to the joy and consolation of his sorrowing family. . . ."

A grand-daughter of Edmond John Rosenberger, Mrs. B. F. Gottwals, Takoma Park, Maryland, who also furnished a copy, added that the original was prepared and printed by Rev. S. Henkel, D. D., pastor of the family church, who preached the funeral sermon.

ROSENBERGER FAMILY

George W. Rosenberger was born at "Rosendale" on February 23, 1823, and died there on November 9, 1902. During his life "Rosendale" was known for many years for its hospitality.⁹⁷ George W. Rosenberger married Barbara Ann Kagey on October 16, 1845. She died June 22, 1887. Their children⁹⁸ were: William Tazwell Rosenberger (born August 15, 1846, married Sallie G. Silbert, died March 15, 1879), Jacob Gaston Rosenberger (born October 12, 1848, unmarried, died September 20, 1886), Frances Katura Rosenberger (born October 10, 1850, married Joseph E. Frey, died June 2, 1893), Florence Virginia Rosenberger (born April 23, 1853, unmarried, died October 3, 1876), Martha Lee Rosenberger (born March 17, 1855, second wife of Charles F. Myers, died 1937), Arthur Russell Rosenberger (born October 3, 1857, married Eva Kirk Long, died January 3, 1945), Georgia Washington Rosenberger (born February 22, 1861, first wife of Charles F. Myers, died December 17, 1886), and Charles Walter Rosenberger (born July 27, 1863, died 1930). George W. Rosenberger married Amelia J. Kagey, his deceased wife's sister, on August 22, 1892.

⁹⁷ A subject of pleasant recollections by members of the family, this was also mentioned in his obituary tributes. Clippings in possession of Mrs. John Yancey, Harrisonburg, Virginia. "Mr. Rosenberger was a useful, active, influential citizen, and engaged in farming, taking great interest in fine cattle, sheep, and fowls, introducing the best breeds, in which he felt a commendable pride; besides giving much attention to bee culture. Especially did he take great pride in his home, where warm hospitality was dispensed with a hearty welcome, and 'Rosendale' was known far and wide, where mirth, music, good cheer and pleasure did much abound." And another: "'Rosendale' was the frequent scene of much lavish hospitality. The old home was one of the most beautiful in its section and was well suited to entertaining in true Virginia style."

⁹⁸ Franklin Keagy, *A History of the Kägy Relationship in America*. (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Harrisburg Publishing Co., 1899), p. 263.

Albert H. Gerberich, *The Brenneman History*. (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: Mennonite Publishing House, 1938), p. 22.

III. *A List of the Rosenberger Marriage Bonds in Shenandoah County, Virginia, 1792-1848*

Anthony Rosenberger and Rebecca Messersmith, May 29, 1792.

Henry Rosenberger, surety.

Rudolph Rosenberger and Barbara Hammon, April 9, 1795.

Mathew Zehring, surety.

Jacob Rosenberger and Betsy Brubeck, August 31, 1799. Daughter of John.

Michael Rosenberger and Betsey Jennings, August 31, 1799. Daughter of William.

Abraham Rosenberger and Rebecca Hammon, January 9, 1802. Anthony Rosenberger, surety.

Henry Rosenberger and Mary Funkhouser, May 21, 1803. Daughter of John.

Joseph Rosenberger and Mary Grady, February 27, 1805. Daughter of William.

John Rozenberger and Elizabeth Koontz, September 19, 1808. Daughter of Jacob and Barbara.

Mary Rosenberger and Abraham Spitler, June 8, 1810. Jacob Broomback, surety.

Anna Rosenberger and Adam Long, September 25, 1810. Abraham Spitler, surety.

Magdaline Rosenbarger and Joseph Hite, May 31, 1811. Daughter of George.

Abraham Rosenberger and Nancy Kitman, December 18, 1815. Widow of George. William Sager, surety.

Barbara Rosenberger and Daniel Spitler, March 3, 1818. Peter Rosenberger, surety.

Peter Rosenberger and Elizabeth Spitler, December 18, 1818. Daughter of Abraham.

ROSENBERGER FAMILY

Ausemus Rosenberger and Rachel Pittman, February 7, 1819.
Daughter of Emanuel.

Cathrine Rosenberger and Henry Baker, February 15, 1819. Rudolph Rosenberger, surety.

Elizabeth Rosenberger and Daniel Sigler, January 10, 1820.
Daughter of Joseph.

Abraham Rosenberger and Rachel Baker, December 11, 1820.
His ward.

Paul Rosenberger and Cathrine Hockman, February 28, 1825.
George Hockman, surety.

Regina Rosenberger and Joseph Brobeck, May 9, 1826. Rudolph Rosenberger, surety.

Mary Ann Rosenberger and Michael Hommon, May 8, 1828.
Abraham Rosenberger, surety.

Jacob Rosenberger and Sophia Pontazer, November 17, 1828.
Son of Rudolph. Daughter of Henry.

Fanny Rosenberger and Levi Bly, April 3, 1830.

Jacob Rosenberger and Anna Rinker, June 18, 1830.

Barbara Rosenberger and John Helzel, March 23, 1831. Daughter of Henry.

Abraham T. W. Rosenberger and Mary Ann Fauver, April 7, 1832. Christian Fauver, surety.

Peggy Ann Rosenberger and Jacob Kern, January 23, 1833.
Daughter of Rudolph.

Rosena Rosenberger and George Lindamood, February 24, 1834.
Son of George.

Henry Rosenberger and Lydia Funkhouser, May 12, 1836.
Daughter of Abraham.

Flora Rosenberger and Samuel Ely, May 24, 1836. William Bly, surety.

Abraham Rosenberger and Elizabeth Weeks, June 28, 1837.
Widow.

John Rosenberger and Sarah Shaffer, November 24, 1837. Jonas Shaffer, surety.

Nancy Rosenberger and Peter Stickley, August 12, 1839. Amos M. Stickley, surety.

MARRIAGE BONDS IN SHENANDOAH COUNTY

Abraham Rosenberger and Lydia Helsley, September 12, 1839.
Daughter of Frederick.

Sarah Rosenberger and Alexander M. Shaver, August 14, 1841.
Daughter of Abraham.

Levi Rosenberger and Barbara Funkhouser, January 29, 1845.
John Funkhouser, surety.

Joseph Rosenberger and Elizabeth Sheets, March 30, 1846. Philip
Sheetz, surety.

Hannah Rosenberger and Nathan Mumbert, August 22, 1848.
Levi Rosenberger, surety.

